



# ***Voting Information News***

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## **Voting Assistance Officers**

### **"To Do" This Month:**

✓ *Ensure the in-hand delivery of FPCAs (SF 76) by January 15 of each calendar year to eligible voters and their voting age dependents. (DoD Directive 1000.4, Section 5.2.1.6)*

✓ Military VAOs, your goal is 100% contact. Remind those citizens you assist to include e-mail address, a phone and fax number on the FPCA. This will make it easier for the local election official to contact the voter during the application process.

✓ Review and use the VAO checklist provided inside this newsletter.

***A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)  
For voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.***

## **Primary Elections, General Elections... Both Are Important!**

The 2004 elections officially begin with the District of Columbia Presidential Preference Primary on Tuesday, January 13; followed by the New Hampshire Presidential Primary on Tuesday, January 27.

Primary elections play an important role in the electoral process. Why? Because the names that appear on the general election ballot on November 2<sup>nd</sup> are the candidates that were chosen during the primary election process. The following is important information that pertains to the electoral process.

A primary election is an election that selects a candidate(s) that will represent the party in a general election. The winning candidate is the one who amasses the largest percentage of the votes during the primary election. This should not be confused with a majority. A majority is a number greater than half of the total votes cast in an election. The winner of a primary election does not necessarily receive a majority of the votes. What this means is that the higher the voter turnout the greater the possibility that the winner is indeed a true representative of the population at large.

Voters who participate in these primaries can have a great impact on their outcome.

Voters in state primaries select their party's candidates for state and federal offices such as Governor, U.S. Senator, and member of the U.S. House of Representatives. While the Presidential primary selects or indicates preference for *delegates*, which may or may not be bound to vote for a particular Presidential candidate at the national convention, a state primary determines the actual *candidates* who will appear on the ballot the day of the general election.

Voter participation is crucial in any election and primaries are no different. Because dates for both Presidential and state primaries are spread throughout the year, be sure to consult the 2004 Election Calendar for election dates in your state. The Election Dates poster is available through your normal supply channels. The calendar is also available in Appendices A and B of the *2004-05 Voting Assistance Guide (VAG)* and is updated on the FVAP website, [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) ✓

## **Internet Voting is Coming!**

**Register & Vote using SERVE!** Are you an active duty Uniformed Services member or a citizen who will be overseas for the 2004 elections? Then get ready for **SERVE!** The Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment will let you register and vote from any Windows-based computer with Internet access, anywhere in the world.

**Are you eligible?** Citizens from 51 counties in 7 states will be able to: register to vote, check registration status, request an absentee ballot, and Vote on-line!

**Find out more!** See if you are eligible by checking out the Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE) website, [www.serveusa.gov](http://www.serveusa.gov) ✓

## Voting Assistance Officers (VAO): A “To Do” Checklist for 2004

- ❑ Get the word out! All personnel need to receive instruction and have access to absentee voting activities, including training sessions; registration drives, distribution of voting materials, and provided the support during the absentee voting process. Post this newsletter monthly on bulletin boards and forward copies by e-mail to those you serve to ensure they are informed.
- ❑ Remind new arrivals to your unit to notify their local election officials (LEO) of their updated mailing address (election materials are generally not forwarded). The FPCA contains a small postage-paid perforated post card that can be used to request a mailing address change with the LEO in the voting residence state.
- ❑ Display the Election Calendar and Motivational Voting Posters in highly visible locations to remind people about registering and voting. Provide contact information to allow people with voting questions to reach you for assistance.
- ❑ Remind citizens of the Voting Information Center which can be accessed toll-free from over 60 countries to hear messages from candidates for federal offices (see contact information on page 4).
- ❑ Promote the use of the electronic transmission service where allowed by state law. You should be familiar with the proper procedures for faxing election materials and make a fax machine available for citizens to use for this purpose wherever possible. Advise citizens to include an e-mail address, a phone number and a fax number (if possible) so the LEO can reach the applicant if needed. Remember, it is very important to use a separate cover sheet for each FPCA faxed. A transmittal (cover) sheet to be used by the absentee voter when faxing to the local election official is included in Appendix C of the VAG. Have plenty of copies available for those using the fax option.
- ❑ New VAOs, before you begin assisting others in filling out the FPCA, go through the process a couple of times. Fill out an FPCA for yourself, using your state's pages in the *Voting Assistance Guide (VAG)*. Then read through the procedures of several other states being mindful of the differences between states (deadlines, notary/witness requirements, specific procedures).
- ❑ Read through the other sections of the VAG. Chapters 1 and 2 provide further instructions on your duties as a VAO. Find your Service Voting Action Officer's (SVAO) contact information in the introduction. Your SVAO is your primary link to voting programs (see Voting Action Officer contact information on page 3).
- ❑ Make sure you are on the distribution list for this newsletter and the voting news releases and that once received, you make it available to all the people you are assisting. These publications are critical to your voting program as they relay information on special and run-off elections held, as well as primary election date changes in the states. To subscribe, send an e-mail to [vote@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.ncr.gov).
- ❑ Read through back issues of this newsletter. The May 2003 VIN explains VAO training online. The September 2003 VIN explains procedures for ordering voting materials for each Service and the Department of State. These issues and many more are available under Publications and Forms at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).
- ❑ Take inventory of your supplies. Ensure that you have a 2004-2005 VAG, voting posters, Federal Post Card Applications (4 for each person you are responsible for providing assistance).
- ❑ Ensure that you have an adequate supply of Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs). If you are overseas, be sure to have one on hand for each person you are responsible for. Consult Chapter 2 of the VAG for usage directions. Be aware that some states have expanded use of the FWAB to include primaries and non-general elections. FWAB's usage may also be expanded on an ad hoc basis by the states.
- ❑ Remind citizens to vote and return the absentee ballots, no matter how late they receive them up until election day. Many states allow for counting of absentee ballots received after election day. NOTE: if the voter has voted the FWAB and has sent it to the LEO and later receives the regular state Absentee ballot; advise him or her to vote the regular state ballot also and to send it immediately. The voter is not voting twice. The LEO, upon receiving the FWAB, places it on hold until it is time for counting the ballots. If the LEO receives, in addition to the FWAB, a properly executed regular state absentee ballot, the LEO will only count the regular state absentee ballot.

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## Voting Assistance Officers (VAO): A "To Do" Checklist for 2004 (continued)

- ❑ Provide training sessions or briefings devoted to registration and absentee voting procedures and include the importance of voting in primary elections (see page 1). These sessions (or a separate one) should be available to family members as well as new personnel. Set aside time to assist those who are newly transferred.
- ❑ Plan to participate in one of the training workshops conducted by the FVAP or take the on-line training.
- ❑ Be sure the installation or Embassy/Consulate telephone operator knows to refer callers requiring voting assistance to you. If your contact information changes, notify the operator immediately.
- ❑ Visit the FVAP's Website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) frequently for information and resources on the Program as well as links to other sites of interest in carrying out your VAO duties. Post the address in visible areas and encourage people to visit the site often for links to their state election websites. Most FVAP publications are available at the site including the PDF version of the 2004-05 VAG. Updates to the website are made on a regular basis.
- ❑ Start planning for **Overseas Citizens Voters Week** (July 4 - July 10, 2004) and **Armed Forces Voters Week** (September 3-11, 2004). Stress early action to ensure registration and participation in the primaries and the November 2 general election.
- ❑ Establish and maintain a continuity folder for your successor upon your departure. This will ensure that your successor receives a quick orientation of his or her VAO responsibilities and will be helpful in meeting your organization's absentee voting needs. Place a copy of each newsletter in the folder and any other information pertaining to absentee voting (voting activities, best practices, lessons learned).
- ❑ Inform your superiors of your activities, especially the voting assistance efforts that you have undertaken. This may include the number of potential voters you assisted, the amount of voting materials distributed and any other pertinent activities (workshops/registration drives) that you coordinated as part of your voting assistance activities.
- ❑ Send your Service Voting Action Officer an e-mail (contact information below) of your best practices and lessons learned. FVAP publishes these for sharing with other VAOs around the world. Chapter 2 of the 2004-05 VAG provides guidelines for submitting best practices and lessons learned.

(continued on next page)

### Voting Action Officers

#### Department of State: Office of Overseas Citizens Services

Chief VAO: Mr. Jack Markey, **tel:** (202) 736-4937, **fax:** (202) 647-6201, **E-mail:** [markeyjd@state.gov](mailto:markeyjd@state.gov)  
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#### Service Voting Action Officers

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**DSN fax:** 221-4532; **E-mail:** [davisj@hoffman.army.mil](mailto:davisj@hoffman.army.mil),  
<https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>

**U.S. Dept. of the Navy:** LT Brian Campbell **tel:** 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (827-5672); **DSN:** 882-4327, **fax:** (901) 874-2785,  
**DSN fax:** 882-2785; **E-mail:** [MILL\\_navyvote@navy.mil](mailto:MILL_navyvote@navy.mil), **http:** <http://www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap>

**U.S. Dept. of the Air Force:** Lt. Col. Lee Shick **tel:** (210) 565-2338 (MSgt. Julie Schlip), **toll free:** 1-866-229-7074 (select option 4, then 6 from menu), **DSN:** 665-2338; **fax:** (210) 565-2543, **DSN fax:** 665-2543;  
**E-mail:** [afpc/dpsfvotingpgmdlist@randolph.af.mil](mailto:afpc/dpsfvotingpgmdlist@randolph.af.mil); **http:** <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund/>

**U.S. Marine Corps:** GySgt Kenneth B. Warford **tel:** (703) 784-9511, **DSN:** 278-9511;  
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**U.S. Coast Guard:** YNCS Lori McNaught **tel:** (202)-267-1636, **fax:** (202) 267-4823;  
**E-mail:** [LMcNaught@comdt.uscg.mil](mailto:LMcNaught@comdt.uscg.mil), **http:** [http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting\\_Assistance.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting_Assistance.htm)

All of the above can also be reached through the DoD Voting Information Center and the FVAP Website.

# **Federal Voting Assistance Program**

Department of Defense  
Washington Headquarters  
Services  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC  
20301-1155

PHONE:  
(703) 588-1584  
DSN 425-1584

FAX:  
(703) 588-0108  
DSN 425-0108

VOTING INFORMATION  
CENTER:  
(703) 588-1343  
DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE:  
1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

*Visit our website for  
international toll-free phone  
and fax numbers.*

E-MAIL:  
vote@fvap.ncr.gov

Website:  
www.fvap.gov

# **Vote!**

## **Voting Assistance Officers (VAO): A "To Do" Checklist (continued)**

- ☐ Remember, the Federal Voting Assistance Program is here to help you if you cannot find the assistance you need locally.
- ☐ Open your doors to assist voters!
- ☐ (Add from your 2004 to do list here)

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## **The 2004-05 DoD Public Affairs Guidance**

The DoD Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) Concerning Political Campaigns and Elections for the 2004 election year has been released and is now available in Acrobat and text format on the FVAP website, [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov), under Voting Assistance Information. The document discusses issues such as state polling places on military installations, official visits to installations by members of Congress during election periods, other items of interest to Installation Commanding Officers and those assisting them, and contact information for these topics. ☒



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